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Mayor's Office on Homelessness

S.F. Homeless Count 2000 Report

May 2, 2000

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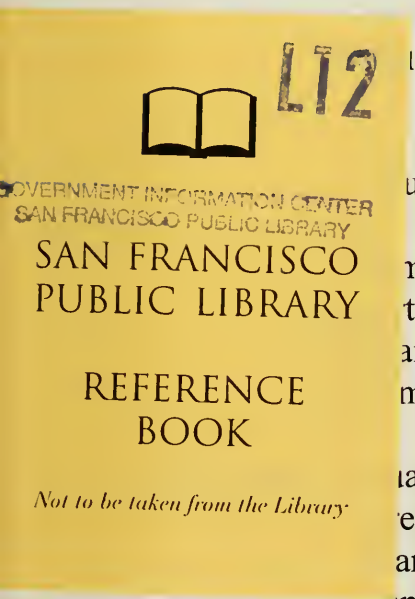
2000 Count Committee

George Smith III, Mayor's Office on Homelessness
Michelle Byrd, Department of Human Services
Charlie Morimoto, Department of Public Health
Deven Richardson, Mayor's Office on Homelessness
Johanna Keeley, Mayor's Office on Homelessness
Carl Hedleston, Administrative Services
Malik Looper, Mayor's Office of Community Development



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Arriba Juntos
ureau of Architecture
Castro Merchants
nmission on the Aging
tment of Human Services
artment of Public Works, GIS
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Purchaser Office
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Martin De Porres
Mayor's Office of Economic Development
Mayor's Office of Community Development
Mayor's Office of Housing
Mayor's Press Office

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Volunteer Organizations

Arriba Juntos
Bureau of Architecture
Castro Merchants
Commission on the Aging
Department of Human Services
Department of Public Health
Department of Public Works, GIS
Purchaser Office
Episcopal Sanctuary (Currently homeless individuals)
Greater Geary Merchants
Hamilton Family Center
Japan Center Merchants
Martin De Porres
Mayor's Office of Economic Development
Mayor's Office of Community Development
Mayor's Office of Housing
Mayor's Press Office

Volunteer Organizations (cont'd)

MSC North (Currently homeless individuals)
North Beach Citizens Project
SF Pretrial Diversion
SLUG
Southwest Mission Neighborhood Association
St. Anthony's Foundation
Supervisor Amos Brown (staff)
Supervisor Becerril (staff)
Supervisor Gavin Newsom (staff)
Swords to Plowshares
The Volunteer Center of S.F.
TURF
UN Plaza Homeless Project
Young Community Developers

Mayor's Office on Homelessness Staff Support

Janet Moomaw, San Francisco State University (student intern)
Amy Lei, City College of San Francisco (student volunteer)
Bonnie Dougherty, Mayor's Office on Homelessness (volunteer)
Sandra James, Mayor's Office on Homelessness
Joseph Breyer, Mayor's Office on Homelessness (volunteer)

Contributors

California Highway Patrol
Cellular One
Noah's Bagels
All Star Donuts

History, Planning and Purpose

Beginning early April 2000, the Mayor's Office on Homelessness began planning efforts to implement a homeless count in conjunction with representatives from the Mayor's Office of Community Development, Department of Public Health, Department of Human Services and City Administrative Services. Over several weeks the count committee held a series of planning meetings to design the operation and solicit support of volunteers. Over 400 individuals, agencies and organizations were invited to participate.

The planning committee used for its guide "Practical Methods For Counting Homeless People" (The Urban Institute, 1996). The planning committee decided on a complete point-in time count of San Francisco, covering the entire city from the hours of 10 PM to midnight. The hours were based on other cities experiences and what time the emergency shelters close for intakes for the evening. The choice for this sort of count was ease, accuracy and it was cost neutral and could be quickly accomplished.

On April 27, 2000, approximately 100 volunteers from community-based organizations, neighborhood organizations, City Departments, Board of Supervisor's staff, religious organizations, homeless, and advocates gathered at the Department of Public Health, 101 Grove Street at 9 PM to participate in the first city-wide in the city. The street count covered the entire city by either car or foot, with most of the walking teams located in the Tenderloin, South of Market, Haight and Castro. Over 40 teams were dispatched throughout the City. The California Highway Patrol conducted an aerial geographic survey of Golden Gate Park, McLaren Park, Buena Vista Park and other open spaces.

The purpose of this count was to gather data to assist in both short term and long term planning for homeless services in San Francisco. The demographics elements included gender, race and neighborhood location.

Street Populations

Cars/RV's/tents
Parks
Coffee Shops
Street/Alley/Plazas/Doorways
Abandoned Buildings
Freeway (Underpass/right of way)

Shelters

Single Adult Facilities
Youth/Young Adult Facilities
Domestic Violence Facilities
Family Facilities
Resource Centers

Statistics at a Glance

Total street population	1,805 individuals
Tenderloin	581
South Market/Potrero	475
Bayview/OMI	436
Haight/Western Addition	111
Mission/Castro	93
Parks	37
Unknown/Other neighborhoods	72

DEMOGRAPHICS

23% Black	50% men
22% White	10% women
5% Latin	40% unknown
06% Asian	

The demographic data for gender and race does not reflect those people who sleep in cars, under blankets, or in tents.

Shelters	*1,805 individuals
Total Homeless (streets & shelters)	3,610 individuals

Survey Results for Homeless Count 2000
42 Surveys

1. How would you describe the level of organization for this project?
   9.5% said very organized
   57% said organized
   26% said somewhat organized
   7% said not organized

2. How heavy was your workload?
   12% said too much
   35% said a little heavy
   42% said just right
   9.5 % said not enough

3. How was your experience participating as a volunteer?
   50% said very pleasant
   40% said pleasant
   10% said challenging
   0 said it was "difficult"

4. Did you have all the necessary resources to complete your assignment?
   77% said "yes"
   17% said "somewhat"
   6% said "no"

Comments/Suggestions

"Our area was to large...some routes need more groups"
"Water would be good"
"THANK YOU!!!…enjoyable!"
"We probably need twice the number of volunteers"
"The maps weren't clear…media and cameras slowed us down"
"KEEP GOING!!"
"Training should be done the day before"
"Dead cell phone, weak batteries in flashlight"
"We had a great team and traveled by car, the area was covered quickly and efficiently"
"Would love to work with team members again on the next assignment"
"A great idea!..I enjoyed participating!"
"Bikes would be good in some areas"
"Thanks for your efforts"
"Loved my partner…decent folks"
"Some routes need more groups"
"Would love to work with team members again"
"You all worked very hard...great job!"
"Happy the city is doing this…and with volunteers"

LESSONS LEARNED

The most inspiring lesson learned from the Homeless Count 2000 was the *spirit* and *enthusiasm* of the volunteers. We were overwhelmed with the variety of people willing to give of their time and energy towards this project.

- Good organization makes a difference
- The commitment and enthusiasm of volunteers was greater than expected
- Effective coordination of City Departments can make the difference
- The time window for the count was appropriate
- Funding requirements are minimal
- Volunteerism facilitates community participation and education

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Conduct a bi-annual count each October and April
- Obtain better detailed maps
- Utilize smaller walking and driving routes
- Improve communications
- Provide refreshments at the end
- Plan for more community input into the operational design
- Increase outreach to potential volunteers
- Use a database system to map homeless population data
- Expand count locations to include Muni/BART
- Expand count to include all privately operated homeless programs